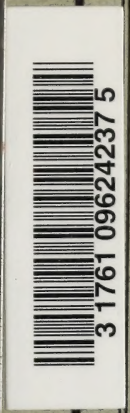
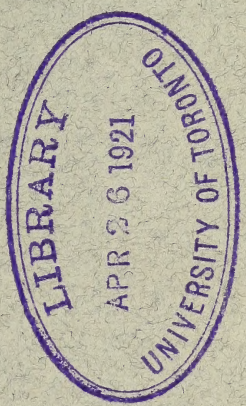
Pamph
Econ
L. H. W.
W.



A National Council for the Printing Trades

Reprinted from the Monthly Labor Review
Bureau of Labor Statistics
February, 1921



By
CHARLES R. WALKER, Jr.
of the
Bureau of Industrial Research
289 Fourth Avenue
New York

50 Cents a Copy

THE OPEN SHOP DRIVE

WHO IS BEHIND IT AND WHERE IS IT GOING?

The Bureau of Industrial Research has just published a pamphlet on the open (anti-union) shop drive. The pamphlet discusses the history, sponsors and activities of the campaign. It considers whether the movement is being promoted by strongly centralized organizations or whether it has arisen spontaneously in many localities. It describes open shop associations like the Associated Employers of Indianapolis, Associated Industries of Seattle, of Montana, and of Paterson, Illinois Manufacturers' Association, Employers' Association of Louisville, etc., etc. It shows what these Associations mean by "The American Plan," "Square Deal for All," "Americanism, Freedom, Prosperity," "Product of an Open Shop," "American Plan of Employment," etc. It gives a table showing the geographic extension of the campaign and explains its relations with private detective agencies.

The New York Evening Post of March 30 says: "The pamphlet constitutes the most comprehensive survey of the movement which has so far been presented."

Bureau of Industrial Research,
289 Fourth Avenue,
New York City.

Regular price 50 cents.*

*HALF PRICE TO TRADE UNIONISTS, STUDENTS AND ON ORDERS OF TEN COPIES OR MORE.

BUREAU OF INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH,
289 Fourth Avenue, New York.

Please send copy of The Open Shop Drive to

Name .....

Address .....

A National Council

for the

Printing Trades

Reprinted from the Monthly Labor Review
Bureau of Labor Statistics
February, 1921

By
CHARLES R. WALKER, Jr.
of the
Bureau of Industrial Research
289 Fourth Avenue
New York

50 Cents a Copy

Copyright, 1921, *by*
The Bureau of Industrial Research
289 *Fourth Avenue*
New York

CONTENTS

Picture of the Industry, Number of Wage-Earners..... 5

Informal Beginnings 9

Structure of the Council..... 11

Council at Work 13

Forty-four Hour Week Controversy..... 14

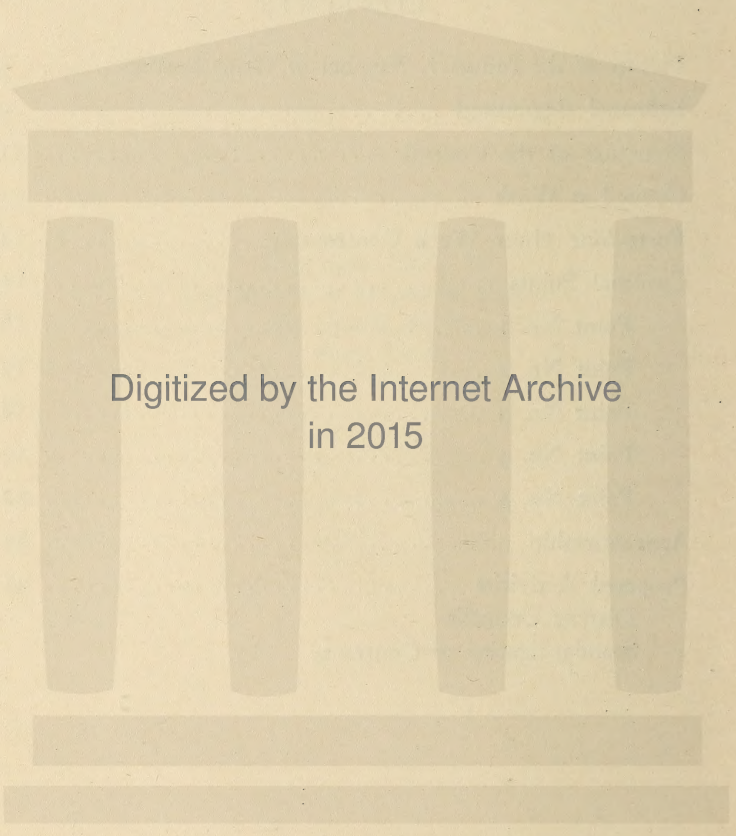
Cardinal Points 15

- Point No. 1 16
- Point No. 2 17
- Point No. 3 18
- Point No. 4 19
- Point No. 5 22

Apprenticeship 24

Proposed Activities 25

- District Councils
- Standardization of Contracts


Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2015

https://archive.org/details/nationalcouncilf00walk

A NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE PRINTING TRADES.

By Charles R. Walker, Jr., of the Bureau of Industrial Research, New York City.

THERE has been a strong tendency all over the world in the past three years and notably since the armistice to set up national industrial councils representative of both employers and working people. It has been especially strong in England and Germany, where well-organized employers' associations and trade-unions furnished the constituent bodies for the new industrial federations. Joint councils for employers and employees have also become popular in America as instruments for tackling the problem of industrial relations, but they have for the most part been confined to "shop committees" and plant councils, and to nonunionized workers. Three industries, however, have established the beginnings of industrial government on a national scale in the United States—printing, electrical, and clothing.

The stated objects of some of the British councils promised little short of a fundamental transformation of industry from its structure to the motives of its leaders. Indications are that the transformation has been indefinitely postponed, but despite this the councils have concrete achievements behind them. The American ones have acted with success upon such imperative issues as unemployment, standardization of shop practices, and wage scales over large areas, uniformity in working conditions, and the settlement of industrial disputes.

Both because the subjects with which they deal are of fundamental social interest and because the movement is a universal one it has seemed worth while to treat in some detail the history of the International Joint Conference Council of the Printing Trades, which is the oldest in America and the most active as a national council. But a special enterprise of the printers adds to the interest of the history. The high cost of living has emphasized for everyone the changing value of the dollar, and the consequent havoc brought to wages, salaries, and contracts. The printing industry is the only one that has attempted in any scientific and thoroughgoing fashion to equalize the real value of wages, both from place to place and from year to year, on anything like a national scale. They have done so by introducing into wage contracts a clause calling for periodic wage adjustments in accordance with the cost of living, and by attempting to equalize wages throughout com-

petitive zones. The story of this pioneer activity is perhaps the most vital chapter in the council's history.

I propose to give (1) a general picture of the industry, its nature, the organizations in it, and their developments, pointing out how they make a reasonable groundwork for the enterprise; (2) a history of the early meetings leading to the creation of the council; (3) the council's structure, its activities, and authority; (4) the council at work, telling the story of its principal achievements in the working out of wage policy, the settlement of the 44-hour week controversy, the standardization of wage scales, and shop practices, the creation of an international arbitration agreement; (5) its proposed activities—district councils and standardization of contracts; (6) a word of evaluation, indicating if possible its permanent place in the industrial structure.

A rough picture of the industry, its craft lines, its commercial peculiarities, and its organized groups will exhibit the groundwork upon which the new council is building, and hence in a measure its hope of success.

Printers divide their trade into newspaper printing and book and job work. We are here concerned only with the unionized section of the book and job printers. Craft lines within the trade, at first indistinct, have emerged with the growth of mechanical improvements until they comprise compositors, pressmen, stereotypers and electrotypers, bookbinders, and photo-engravers. All of these crafts were at one time included in a single union, the International Typographical, founded at Cincinnati in 1852. The pressmen set up an organization of their own in 1882,[1] the photo-engravers in 1900, the bookbinders in 1892, the stereotypers and electrotypers in 1902. Each of these separate unions has now its own national body and subordinate locals.

Intercraft organizations have grown up, however, so there is still a considerable measure of solidarity among the "allied trades." For the city or district there are local allied printing trades councils[2] embracing all crafts, and for a national body the councils send their representatives to the International Allied Printing Trades Council.[3]

The employers' associations (book and job) are the International Association of Employing Stereotypers and Electrotypers, the American Photo-engravers Association, the United Typothetæ of America, and the Employing Printers of America. The latter is an open-shop organization and does not enter into this history. The United Typothetæ was formed in 1887 and is the oldest association of master printers that has a continuous history down to the present time.

---

[1] Formally organized and recognized, 1889.

[2] The local councils enforce the rules established for their protection. They are also active in other trades' matters, such as assisting in the enactment of labor legislation, opposing hostile legislative measures, adjusting disputes between unions and employers and between the unions themselves.—The Industrial Education Survey of the City of New York, Report of the Committee Authorized by the Board of Estimate and Apportionment in 1918. Part I, p. 28.

[3] This body is owner of the Allied Printing Trades' union label.

The development of labor relationships between these organized bodies of employers and unionists, culminating in the national council, has been a slow but continuous growth. In the first 30 years of its history the International Typographical Union had no direct relations of a friendly character with employers, but in 1885 an event occured that broke the ground for national collective dealing. The International established a defense fund for the support of unions on strike and thus acquired an effective control over locals in need of strike money. From that date the International officers acquired increasing control over the bargaining of local unions and began to deal directly with groups of employers.

Trade-unions met the Typothetæ in conference for the first time in 1898.[4] The meeting resulted in an agreement for the peaceable adoption of the 9-hour day. Collective bargaining on a national scale was established in 1902, by an agreement entered into between the pressmen and the Typothetæ providing for arbitration of wage scales and shop practice. Another step was taken in 1917, when the Closed Shop Branch of the Typothetæ signed an "international arbitration agreement" with the International Typographical Union. The stereotypers and electrotypers likewise have an agreement with their employers.[5] In addition to these national agreements a large number of "contracts" exist between local unions and the employers which in many instances are underwritten by the International Union.

Thus when the printers decided upon joint action between employers and trade-unionists, early in 1919, they had certain precedents for their action. They had also the actual instruments of organization on both sides for carrying out their purposes. The International Joint Conference Council, created April 21, 1919, is composed on the employers' side of representatives of the Closed Shop Branch of the United Typothetæ, and the International Association of Employing Stereotypers and Electrotypers, and on the employees' side of representatives of the four international unions—the compositors (typographical), pressmen, bookbinders, stereotypers and electrotypers. The photo-engravers are not members of the council.

Beside a favoring historical development there are certain characteristics of the industry itself that tend to make a national cooperative effort natural and its success probable. These are: (1) The prevailing number of small plant units into which the industry is divided. This condition creates a varying multitude of shop rules, shop conditions, and wage scales which it is to everyone's advantage to standardize through a national body. (2) The industry is composed largely of American workmen and is therefore homogeneous and organizable; (3) the printers' work is for the most part non-

[4] The conference was between the pressmen, the Typographical Union, and the United Typothetæ. It resulted in an agreement (signed at Syracuse, N. Y., Oct. 12, 1898) inaugurating the 9½-hour day on Nov. 21, 1898, and the 9-hour day, or 54-hour week, on Nov. 21, 1899.

[5] For a list of the national agreements in force at the present time in the printing industry, see p. 38, footnote 40.

seasonal, and the amount of unemployment small; (4) the unions in the trade have a long history and a record of distinguished leadership.

These characteristics can be briefly illustrated:

(1) The total number of wage earners in the printing industry according to the 1914 census was 272,092. Of these 141,644, or 52 per cent worked in plants of 50 workers or less;[6] whereas in the steel industry, for example, out of a total of 248,716 workers in the steel and rolling mills, 194,429, or 78 per cent, were, in 1914, in shops of 500 or more.[7]

(2) A conception of the ratio between American and foreign-born printers can be gained by examining conditions in New York City, which does one-fourth of the printing and publishing in the United States.[8] According to the 1910 census there were 16,826 compositors, linotypers, and typesetters in the city. Of these 11,534, or 68 per cent were native born. Of the 3,668 pressmen in the city, 2,109, or 79 per cent, were native born. Compared with other skilled trades, such as carpentry, with 70 per cent foreign born, or brick and stone masonry, with 68 per cent foreign born, the contrast is striking.[9]

(3) The amount of seasonal work for the printers is probably less than for any other class of skilled workers. The Industrial Education Survey of New York, 1918, states that in book and job shops the minimum employed during the year is 90 per cent of the maximum number employed.[10] An analysis of trade-unions members unemployed in Massachusetts in six principal industries shows that least unemployment was experienced by transportation and the printing and allied trades. The order in which the industries fall according to percentage of unemployment is: (1) Building; (2) textile manufacturing; (3) boot and shoe manufacturing; (4) iron and steel manufacturing; (5) printing and allied trades; (6) transportation. The building trades show great fluctuation—between 3 and 34 per cent, with an approximate average of 16 per cent. The printers show little fluctuation, varying from 3 to 12 per cent, with an approximate average of 6 per cent.[11]

(4) The printers' trade-unions are among the oldest in the United States. Several were in existence before 1800, and Typographical Union No. 6 of New York dates in unbroken history from 1809. Their leadership has been of a high quality and occasionally distinguished. Horace Greeley was president of Typographical Union No. 6 in 1850. Ely Moore, who became labor's first representative in Congress, was a New York printer and trade-unionist. He was president of the National Trades-Union in 1834-35, and

[6] United States Census of Manufactures, 1914, vol. 2, p. 636, Table 22.
[7] United States Census of Manufactures, 1914. vol. 2, p. 224, Table 43.
[8] The value of the product in printing and publishing for 1914 for New York City was $230,961,612 (Census of Manufactures, 1914, vol. 1, p. 993); for the United States, $901,534,000 (Abstract of the Census of Manufactures, 1914, p. 152).
[9] Industrial Education Survey of the City of New York, 1918, Pt. 1, p. 24.
[10] Idem, p. 26.
[11] Public Document, No. 15. Forty-ninth Annual Report on Statistics of Labor for the year 1918, p. 40, Pt. IV.

in 1838-39 political editor of the New York Evening Post. Other prominent members of Typographical Union No. 6 were John W. Reid, the journalist, and George W. Peck, who was governor of Wisconsin in 1891-1895.[12]

It is impossible to give a picture of trade-unionism among American printers without mentioning its fraternal and benefit features. As Prof. Barnett points out in his monograph on the printers, they have always regarded their beneficiary features not as aids in the enforcement of trade regulations, but as fully worth while on their own account. Like many trade-unions they early established funeral, sickness, and unemployment benefits; since 1892 the International Typographical Union has maintained a home for aged or sick printers, and since 1908 a system of old-age pensions. The pressmen likewise have a home for their aged members, a tuberculosis sanitarium, and a well-equipped school for presswork apprentices.

INFORMAL BEGINNINGS

THE origin of the International Joint Conference Council in the printing industry is probably traceable to a conversation. Several weeks before the first informal conference an employer and a trade-unionist had a chat on the state of the trade. The industry seemed wholly enveloped in a cloud of trouble. H. C. L. was hitting the journeyman printers with a particular punch. Most of them were working under three-year contracts which barred any readjustment to meet the new level of prices. Many employers faced an unfair competition. Widely fluctuating wage scales made the cost of production cheap in one part of the country and dear in another. The two men agreed that an informal conference between employers and trade-unionists might bring to light some measures of relief. They resolved to suggest such a meeting to their respective organizations.

A conference was held between representative employers and trade-unionists in Washington on February 3, 1919.[13] The temporary chairman opened the meeting with a mild "cooperation" speech. He cautiously suggested that employers and employees were meeting "with the possible view of encouraging a relationship that might prove profitable to both." The body did not regard itself as a council of authority. It was "clearly understood that everyone present represented himself."

Despite informality and the absence of special authority, the conferees vigorously discussed the critical issues of the industry. They took up uniform shop practices, the desirability of negotiating simultaneously with all unions, guaranteeing of contracts, unfair competition and the advisability of a standard cost system for the industry. It was a foreshadowing of the work of the council for the next 18 months.

[12] New York Typographical Union No. 6, Chs. XIII and XLI, prepared under the direction of John Williams, commissioner of labor, State of New York, 1913.

[13] The conference comprised seven representative employers, and the board of governors of the International Allied Printing Trades Association.

"When you have shop rules that in some instances cause two men to work where under another shop rule they work one, it is hard to get away from competition." Shops differed extraordinarily in such things as rules about "struck work," holidays, sanitary conditions, number of men on jobs. In the long run it was better for everyone to have a standard.

Next, an employer in New York related that he made agreements with 16 different unions. He was negotiating wage scales all the year round. Why not a single conference and a single agreement?

Another competition problem was discussed, "the bedroom shop." In certain small establishments the whole family works. Costs are reduced to a minimum and the proprietor undersells the ordinary printer, who, if he is under agreement to pay standard wages, must either cut them or go out of business. This situation is a constant menace to the standard of living of the journeyman printer. And besides, many of the small shops end in bankruptcy and demoralize the industry. Surveys of the printing industry showed that many of them operate without cost finding or even accounting systems of any kind, and the proprietors, not knowing their condition, run at a loss. As a solution a universal use of some standard system of cost finding was proposed.

The conference closed with the formulation of plans for another meeting at which "organizations and not simply persons" should be represented so that the cooperative measures suggested might take concrete shape.[14]

The second meeting was held in Cincinnati, March 10 and 11, 1919. It was called in the stenographic report a "General conference of employers in printing and the allied trades and of the printing and allied trades-unions." The conference opened with observations upon the general trend toward joint organizations of employers and employees the world over. Developments in Germany and the English Whitley councils came in for remark.

When the printers turned their attention to America they grew very concrete, grappling with the problem of guaranteeing contracts with trade-unions. One employer related two examples of revolt. In one, after entering into a contract, underwritten by the international union, the local defied the international and struck. This was against its own laws and the international's. The other case was of a local which refused to have its international underwrite its contract.

Discussion from both sides favored underwriting, although it was clear that it furnished only an imperfect guaranty. One union leader remarked: "When the local union says, 'We don't want this underwritten, we want to make this a local proposition with you,' and the employing printer consents, it is impossible for the national union to make a local * * * comply with the law and have the contract underwritten." He urged the in-

[14] Other subjects touched on in the conference were the so-called "individual strike," where employees leave and call it a "walk-out of dissatisfied workers," and the authority of employers' associations over their own members.

clusion in every contract of a provision for underwriting. In the event of violation either by the local union or by the local employer there would remain two other parties to compel the third.

A suggestion that all the unions in the various printing crafts together underwrite every contract was discussed, but appeared under present conditions impractical.

Uniformity in wage scales was urged. It was pointed out that whenever a city has a scale greatly in advance of the surrounding country employers and employees moved away, leaving a great deal of idle machinery in the deserted city. If a uniform scale were in force, employers and employees would stay at home.

At the third meeting, held in Chicago, April 21, 1919, the constitution of the International Joint Conference Council of the Commercial and Periodical Branches of the Printing Industry was adopted.[18] The council later received the formal ratification of its constituent bodies. These organizations are:

Employees.—International Typographical Union; International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union; International Brotherhood of Bookbinders; International Stereotypers' and Electrotypers' Union.

Employers.—Closed Shop Branch United Typothetæ of America; Printers' League of America; International Association of Electrotypers.

STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL.

THE council is at present composed of 16 members, 8 from each side, although certain problems connected with the proper basis of representation are still under discussion.

The constitution adopted at the April 21. 1919, meeting outlines the general objects in the following terms:

> To promote the spirit of cooperation and to deal with the problems of the industry in a way to insure the protection of the interests of all concerned, the establishment of an international joint conference council, made up of representatives of employers and employees, which shall be thoroughly informed as to conditions and interests of all parties in the industry and in a position to suggest for ratification regulations which shall eventually become the law of the industry, is considered essential.

One of the life-giving ideas behind the council movement in America, whether it be in the shop, district, or Nation, is the conviction that there should be no outsiders as regulators. This is clearly one of the ideas in the above quotation. Those daily acquainted with the industrial structure are best fitted to work out the machinery of adjustment.

The traditional principle of voluntary arbitration as a means of settling industrial disputes is reaffirmed in the second paragraph of the preamble.

> Controversies between employers and employees can and should be adjusted

[18] Proceedings, Joint Conference of the Representatives of International Unions and Representatives of Employers' Associations of the Printing Industry and Allied Trades, Chicago, Ill., Apr. 21, 1919, p. 61.

through voluntary agreements to refer disputes to boards of conciliation and arbitration composed of representatives of employers and employees in the industry affected.

This restating of the principle came at a time when it was being questioned and weakened by a series of strikes and propaganda for direct action among a group of New York trade-unionists.

The constitution is careful to specify that the council is primarily a constructive, policy-making body rather than a judicial one:

> The International Council is to devote its activities not primarily to disputes, to the fixation of wage scales, the making of specific wage agreements and the like, but to matters of policy.

The "scope of activities" suggested under Section III of the constitution covers the whole field of industrial relations. The constitutional suggestions may be summarized as follows:

(*a*) Outlining of general trade policies.
(*b*) Consideration of any legislation affecting the trade.
(*c*) Uniform working hours and shop practices.
(*d*) Cooperating with Government to maintain selling prices.
(*e*) Consideration and review of the causes of any disputes which may arise in the industry.
(*f*) Apprenticeship; the improvement of process, designs, and standards of workmanship; consideration of improvements of processes, machinery, organization, appropriate questions relating to management, and the examination of industrial experiments; utilization of the practical knowledge and experience of employees; utilization of inventions designed by employees or employers.
(*g*) Wage adjustment boards.
(*h*) Consideration of any matters of interest to the trade, whether industrial, educational, economic, legislative, or hygienic.

Nearly all of these activities have been touched upon in the actual work of the council. Under clause (*e*) it has dealt with the whole question of industrial disputes by advocating the formation of separate local and national boards of arbitration for each branch of the industry, thus delegating the judicial function to machinery outside of, though affiliated with, itself. This is treated under the subdivision "cardinal point No. 5" (see p. 22).

The method of expressing the council's authority is clearly set forth. Each side submits a " bill of particulars" for action in the form of resolutions. These must be unanimously passed by the International Council and ratified by the constituent bodies, parties to the agreement, before they can be effective. When so passed and so ratified they "shall be binding upon all parties to this agreement and shall become the law of the trade."

In order to carry out its objects, the council recognizes as the "proper and legitimate agencies" through which to function, local unions, chapels, and shop committees affiliated with the respective international unions which are parties to the agreement, local allied printing trades councils, and local associations of employers in the respective trades dealing with the unions under the agreement. The local groups may submit to the council, "for

consideration and action, any proposal of mutual interest," if not in conflict with the constitution of the International Joint Conference Council.

The effect of the International Council will be to strengthen existing organizations on both sides by giving sanction to all local agreements between unions and employers, after they have been underwritten by their respective international unions. "In the event that any local union or local employer violates or disregards the terms of this agreement, the action of such recalcitrant union or employer shall be publicly disavowed by the International Council and the aggrieved parties shall be furnished with an official document to that effect."

The council is not an exclusive organization but many "receive applications from organizations of either employees or employers who have not ratified this agreement and by unanimous vote may admit such applicants to all privileges and responsibilities of this agreement."

Two "constitutional" points should perhaps be specially mentioned. The council is presided over by joint chairmen, and a unanimous vote is necessary " to carry any resolution involving the establishment of general principles affecting any of the trades parties to this agreement." Examples of this would be the action taken in the adoption of the 44-hour week, or the international arbitration agreement. The council is jointly financed by the bodies represented in it.

THE COUNCIL AT WORK.

THE constitution of the council was adopted at the April 21, 1919, meeting, but ratification by referendum of the constituent bodies took place during the following summer months, and was fully accomplished only when the electrotypers approved the document at their September convention.[17] The photo-engravers who were present at the early meetings withdrew and set up a joint industrial council of their own.

In the records of the 12 meetings, held roughly at intervals of six weeks from February 3, 1919, to July 9, 1920, several outstanding issues can be distinguished from incidental business. These are: The 44-hour week issue, the "five cardinal points of a labor policy," a cost-of-living clause for contracts, a standard international arbitration agreement for all unions, the

[17] The pressmen did not technically ratify the constitution till their convention in November, although an informal vote taken earlier indicated the approval of the rank and file. For a complete record of ratification by constituent bodies, see:

Proceedings, International Joint Conference Council, New York, August 4, 1919, pp. 4, 5.

Minutes of Proceedings, Executive Council, United Typothetæ of America, Chicago, July 18, 19, 1919.

Proceedings, International Joint Conference Council, New York, September 18, 1919, p. 3.

Synopsis of Proceedings of International Association of Electrotypers, Twenty-second National Convention, St. Louis, September 26, 27, 1919, in Bulletin, October, 1919, Vol. V, No. 54, p. 251.

The Typographical Journal, Official Paper of International Typographical Union, vol. 55, No. 2, August, 1919, p. 45.

The American Pressman, Vol. XXX, No. 1, December, 1919, p. 40.

The International Bookbinder, Official Journal of the International Brotherhood of Bookbinders, Vol. XX, No. 10, October, 1919, p. 347.

The International Stereotypers and Electrotypers Union Journal, vol. 14, No. 7, July, 1919, p. 101.

apprenticeship question, district councils, and standardization of contracts. Nearly all of these issues were touched on in some form by question, resolution, or brief discussion at the earlier meetings. Some, like the decision on the 44-hour week issue, received early action, while others like the "cardinal points of a labor policy" began early, but ran through several meetings before their implications appeared, and their statement was perfected and approved. One or two, like the proposal for district councils, which were hinted at early, received attention through several meetings and still await final action.

The building of the council and the instruments for accomplishing its purposes have been notably gradual and unforced. Receiving an initial impulse from the havoc that the H. C. L. was making in wage scales, the representatives attempted to work out with the utmost frankness an agreed basis for wage policy. Once established, nearly every concrete measure has grown out of this basic platform.

FORTY-FOUR HOUR WEEK AND THE NEW YORK CONTROVERSY.

THE prospect of a 44-hour week in the printing industry had long been considered. It was pointed out that it was the part of wisdom to introduce the change nationally and on the same day. The printers vividly recalled that when the reduction from nine to eight hours was made, a nation-wide strike had resulted and immense losses for both sides. Representatives of the New York unions were present at the April 21 meeting and stated that if the 44-hour week could be put into effect, nationally, October 1, 1919, New York would agree to it. The issue was hotly contested. Some employers denounced the 44-hour week as an "economic crime," some unions demanded its inauguration "at once." At length the council, at the April 21 meeting, agreed to recommend to its constituent bodies the adoption of the shorter week nationally, May 1, 1921, 19 months after the date set by New York.[17] A referendum vote was taken by the associations and unions throughout the country and the resolution passed by a large majority.

The issue, however, was by no means closed. A situation developed in New York that threatened the very existence of the council. The New York locals remained irreconcilable. They charged that their international officers were in collusion with the employers. If the council had not postponed the reduction, New York, they claimed, would have secured it by October.

Franklin Union No. 23 and Pressmen's Union No. 51 then withdrew from their internationals. These two unions together comprise about 5,500 men, or a major part of the pressmen and feeders in New York City.

[17] Proceedings, Joint Conference of the Representatives of International Unions and Representatives of Employers' Associations of the Printing Industry and Allied Trades, Chicago, Ill., Apr. 21, 1919, p. 63.

The position of the seceding unions was this: The pressmen, in the first place, felt they were justified in remaining outside their international because they believed their officers guilty of misappropriation of funds. But this was an incidental complication. Primarily, they argued that the officers who had passed the disputed resolution, because of the unfair voting methods permitted by the pressmen's constitution, were unrepresentative of the major part of the international union, and that the manner of taking the referendum was likewise unfair.

The council believed this a matter to be settled within the international, that the real issue was "constitutional methods versus direct action." They felt that certain New York locals, having recently found strike action successful, believed they could buck the country.

The employers were presented with this dilemma: If they continued to operate their presses with these locals, they would be recognizing unions condemned by their own internationals; they would also be conceding the 44-hour week for October 1, 1919, in face of the resolution of the International Joint Conference Council which had been ratified by a vote of locals throughout the country. On the other hand, if they remained firm they would tie up the printing industry in New York, the largest printing city in the world. They chose to stand behind the council and the resolution. A final victory for the council and for the internationals resulted after several weeks of stormy controversy, which included a lockout, a strike, and a "vacation."

The International Joint Conference Council had passed through an ordeal of fire and survived. It felt it was a victory for "constitutional methods" of settling disputes as against "direct action," and for the principle of responsibility toward the internationals.

THE CARDINAL POINTS.

AT THE June 2 meeting, wage charts[18] were presented which revealed a surprising condition and gave a fact basis to labor discussion. The charts covered the wage development of some of the key crafts of the printing industry (book and job)—compositors, cylinder pressmen, and cylinder feeders—for the years 1912 to 1919. Data had been secured covering 44 representative cities arranged by regional groups as follows: North Atlantic; North Central; South Atlantic; South Central; Western.[19] Cost-of-living figures were also shown for each of the cities.

With the statistics of the wage and cost-of-living situation graphically before the council, steps toward solution suggested themselves naturally and convincingly. It was found that wide variation between wages existed in the same competitive zone. For example, in 1919 up to May 15, the wages

[18] Proceedings, International Joint Conference Council, New York City, June 2, 1919, p. 26.

[19] The wage data presented on these charts were secured from reports sent in from the local organizations of the Typothetæ, from bulletins of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics Nos. 131, 143, 194, 214, 245, and from information furnished by some of the unions.

for compositors in Chicago were $36-$37, in Cincinnati, $24-$25, in Cleveland, $30-$31, in Columbus, $28-$29, in Detroit, $34-$35, and in Grand Rapids, $24-$25. There was apparently no principle or basis for determining wages which would tend to make them uniform. The cost of living had not acted as this principle. In fact it was shown that the highest scales were often in effect where the cost of living was lowest. Taking Denver, which had the lowest cost of living, as a base, or index of 100, Portland, Oregon, was paying a wage of $38-$39 to compositors in 1919[29] with a cost of living of 100.62, while New Haven paid for the same period $22-$23 with a cost of living of 139.70. This is an extreme instance of discrepancy. But the statement that the highest wages were paid where the cost of living was lowest proved true, though in a less striking manner, in a comparison of the whole group of cities in the North Atlantic group, where the cost of living was highest, with the whole group of cities in the western group, where it was lowest. In the western group the average cost of living was 100.99. Seven of the eight western cities paid wages of $30-$31 or more, one city a wage of $28-$29. In the North Atlantic group, where the average cost of living was 132.39, all the cities except one paid wages of $28-$29 or less; the one exception paid a wage of $36-$37. The comparison between the two groups can be clearly summarized in tabular form.

COMPARISON OF COST OF LIVING AND WAGES IN NORTH ATLANTIC AND WESTERN GROUPS OF CITIES.
(Cost of living in Denver = 100.)

Regional group.	Cost of living index.	Average wage.
North Atlantic	132.39	$27.55
Western	100.99	32.25

Here was evidence of great lack of uniformity in printers' wage scales, and of no regard for the cost-of-living principle. Combined with the fact of long-term contracts it was enough to explain the strikes, lockouts, and broken agreements that had multiplied among printers since the armistice.

CARDINAL POINT No- 1.

The council decided upon cardinal point No. 1 as a step toward a new labor policy:

That the industry frankly recognizes the cost of living, as compared to 1914, as the basic factor in wage adjustments.

"Why the cost of living as compared to 1914?" was asked. It was the aim of the council to provide a reasonable living to every wage-earning printer. That was clearly the accepted principle. Why not decide the case

[29] Statistics were available only up to May 15.

on its merits from the data available to-day? Because it would compel the council to dictate for a large group of men what a "reasonable standard of living" was, an impossible position and one likely to stir up resentment. It was better to have a base in history from which argument or statistics could make their start.

CARDINAL POINT No. 2.

But accepting 1914, even that appeared on examination as a very uncertain base. Sometimes wages were too low in 1914. A percentage increase adequate to bring the wage to a reasonable level in one city would still leave it far too low in another. Cardinal point No. 2 was adopted to cover this clear contingency:

> The industry to pay at least a reasonable living wage; scales below this to be adjusted in frank recognition of the principle involved.[21]

This point was illustrated in practice a little later in the case of Detroit. Its 1914 wage scale was found considerably below near-by cities. A contract was negotiated which took a base for adjustment $2.50 higher than the actual 1914 base.

Discussion of cardinal points No. 1 and No. 2 at the October 30, 1919, meeting showed another angle of the same special difficulty. A representative said: "If one branch of the industry were getting in 1914 two, three, and four dollars more a week than * * * another branch * * * isn't it entirely reasonable, now, that the branch getting the highest amount at that time would feel that that was the base?" The method suggested in case this difficulty were met in practice was this: A composite figure was to be obtained by averaging the wages in surrounding cities within the competitive zone.[22] This would indicate whether or not that city was above or below the average.

There followed in the June 2, 1919, meeting a vigorous debate over wages, and one of the most enlightening in the council's history. It was a frank discussion among practical men of opposed viewpoints regarding the economic basis of wage payment. A union representative found a difficulty in the two cardinal points and expressed it as follows:

> If you are going to have the sole right of decreasing wages upon the decrease in the cost of living, then very properly we should say, we have something to do with the matter of the profits of the business, because, after all, I will repeat, the * * * cost of living might decrease and yet the profits of the business might automatically increase.[23]

He went on to expand his point of view on wage determination:

> There are two factors that enter into intelligent negotiations in wage scales. First is the demand of the organization for an increase in wages on the ground that the cost of living has increased and the responsibilities have increased, and then instantly we

[21] Proceedings, International Joint Conference Council, New York City, June 2, 1919, p. 67.
[22] Idem, New York City, Oct. 30, 1919, p. 26.

meet with the proposition of the employers and proof is brought that he hasn't the money to pay toward meeting this demand. Now both of these are competent questions for negotiations. * * * We certainly would not consider a reduction in wages when the income of the employer was the same or improving—that would be going backward.[24]

An employer representative countered. He objected strongly to the absence of specific mention in the cardinal points of a reduction in wages to follow a reduction in the cost of living. It seemed almost as if revision upward had been provided but that a peg was stuck in at the highest point, barring any adjustment downward. "Very truly," he said, "it is all on one side, like the handle of a jug."

As the discussion proceeded, the truth in both positions became distinguishable, and was accepted by both sides. It was clear, as one employer put it, that what was "sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander";that if wages went up with the cost of living they should come down with any material reduction. But it was also clear that reduction in wages should not necessarily follow reduction in prices. That depended on what came to be called in the third cardinal point, the "economic condition of the industry."

When you come to the next step, after you get above that limit (cost of living) there is some difficulty in establishing a standard—a permanent living standard. If something occurs, it may or may not increase the cost of living, although it might increase the profits of the industry. That may be a factor to be taken into consideration. If taken into consideration such adjustments should be made on the basis of fact as determined by a uniform cost accounting system.[25]

CARDINAL POINT No. 3.

Cardinal point No. 3 was introduced to broaden the basis of wage determination, as well as to urge the inclusion in contracts of the principle of adjustable scales:

That when not in conflict with the existing laws of a constituent body, local contracts to be for a period not less than three years, and include a clause providing for annual readjustments of wages based upon cost of living as determined by authorities agreed upon and upon the economic condition of the industry at the time of readjustments.[26]

The meaning of "economic condition" received a little expansion in a later meeting:

Those economic factors are * * * questions of competitive conditions within the industry * * * the question of whether the industry is losing or making a profit, which gives it a living wage in the way of rents and capital charges and things of that sort. Those economic factors are vital and we can not escape their consideration in addition to the cost of living.[27]

There was a third party at interest in wage determination which thus far

[23] Idem, New York City, June 2, 1919, p. 69.
[24] Idem, p. 72.
[25] Idem, p. 78.
[26] Idem, p. 81.
[27] Idem, Aug. 4, 1919, p. 39.

had found no protagonist—the public. But this party slipped into the discussion at last.

> We are making arguments to our publishers, that we are obliged to increase our men in common decency, because of the increased cost of living, and obliged to ask them to still further increase the amounts that they are paying us, even though we have contracts with them; and they are acceding to those requests and arguments. * * * If the cost of living goes down, we will say to 50 per cent above 1914 [they will say], we want to have our contract restored to a point that would be right at a 50 per cent increase in the cost of living and we are going to be unable to answer that argument.[28]

More than this, it was very cogently argued that one of the factors in H. C. L. itself was the disposition of manufacturers to keep prices high, even when the economic condition of industry did not demand it. If the printers insisted on keeping up prices and wages when others were reducing them, they were failing to do their part in helping the country to break the H. C. L.

This was clearly a just consideration. It did not, however, nullify the principle of considering economic factors in the wage determination, but merely added another factor to the equation.

There was no objection to reduction, some one concluded, provided both elements that entered into the operation were considered; the question of the cost of living and the question of the economic conditions of the industry.

This discussion between leading trade-unionists and employers in an important industry is an interesting case of an attack by practical men upon some of the difficulties of the wage system. There are two chief points of interest in the discussion. Economists are almost agreed that one of the most fundamental social maladjustments from which we suffer is the "unstabilized dollar." It is a chief cause of our panics, and a large factor in industrial strikes. With a change in the purchasing power of money, wages and salaries unhappily lag far behind. The printing industry is the only one that has begun to take thoroughgoing measures to make "actual wages" the same, not only from year to year, but from place to place, through something approaching a national program. This is the first point of interest.

The second is that "other factors" are at least recognized as legitimate considerations in determining a just wage scale. The printers said: "The cost of living might decrease and yet the profits of the business might automatically increase." The conventional economist might perhaps reply: "That is a temporary condition. A general lowering of prices will mean in time a general lowering of wages. Therefore any attempt to keep up wages, when prices in general are falling, will only be temporarily successful." The answer might be: "The whole method of fixing wage scales through consideration of living costs or any factors whatever in place of leaving the whole thing up to 'supply and demand' is by way of being a device. It is a device to secure a prompter and a more accurate human adjustment than natural

[28] Idem, New York City, Sept. 18, 1919, p. 20.

forces can possibly achieve. It does not oppose the law of supply and demand —it outstrips it. As an illustration, suppose in a certain group of towns of which Denver was the center, that prosperity and a condition of increased earnings continued for a year after a general fall in prices. Should not employees share with employers this continued prosperity? Yet with a scale adjustable only upon the cost-of-living principle, or upon no principle whatever (other than supply and demand) they would in most cases be unable to do so." This is manifestly but one manner of regarding a limited aspect of the problem raised. It is clearly a subject that suggests inquiries as profound as the student cares to make them. But it is not necessary here to go further to demonstrate the importance of this second principle.

The three "cardinal points of a labor policy," together with one of two others considered below, were adopted by the council and indorsed by its constituent bodies.[29] No. 3 opened the way for a concrete enterprise in putting the principle into action. It urged "local contracts to be for a period not less than three years, and to include a clause providing for annual readjustments of wages based upon the cost of living as determined by authorities jointly agreed upon and upon the economic condition of the industry at the time of readjustment."

Full discussion lasting over several meetings finally resulted in a skeleton cost-of-living clause for incorporation into local contracts. Examination was first made of existing clauses. An agreement in the city of Tacoma embodied the cost-of-living principle of adjustment and suggested a fair basis for the uniform contract. The plan was also found already in effect in the Index Envelope Co. of Cleveland, the New York Banking and Trust Co., and in one of the counties of Illinois among public service employees.[30] On May 17, 1920, a cost-of-living clause was indorsed by the council and recommended for adoption in local contracts.[31]

CARDINAL POINT No. 4.

It had been suggested during the discussion of the first three cardinal points that the only way to discover the "economic condition" of printing plants (point No. 3) was through a standard system of cost accounting for the industry. It was further suggested as a means of spreading the cost-finding gospel, that the obligation to operate under the standard cost-finding system be included as a clause in local contracts. These suggestions were embodied in cardinal point No. 4 at the June 2, 1919, meeting:[32]

That a uniform standard system of cost accounting is considered fundamental to insure stability, permanence, and prosperity to the industry and to provide a basis for securing a greater degree of uniformity in conditions throughout the country; a

[29] Cardinal points Nos. 1 and 2 were adopted at the June 2 meeting. See Proceedings, International Joint Conference Council, New York City, June 2, 1919, p. 67.
[30] Idem, pp. 27 and 29.
[31] Idem, Philadelphia, Pa., May 17, 1919, p. 80.
[32] Idem, New York City, June 2, 1919, p. 88.

clause to be included in local agreements providing that such standard system as is recognized by the organizations represented in the International Joint Conference Council to be required.

At the September 18, 1919, meeting it was reported that certain employers and unions entering into local contracts were looking for a model cost-finding clause which they could incorporate, and it was suggested that the council frame and recommend one. Clauses already in existence were reviewed. A somewhat extreme form was found in operation in Portland and San Francisco, so worded that the union refused to work in a place where the standard cost-finding system was not in operation, and where the employer was not a member of the local employers' association. A simpler case was found incorporated in the St. Louis contract, which read: "The various unions agree not to grant the use of the label, nor to permit of union men working in any printing office unless that office agrees to operate its business under the standard cost-finding system."[33]

In discussing the clause some one said it was "not the intention to make a cast-iron rule to cover either the employers or the unions on the subject," but to "formulate a section which we could recommend * * * and then if local parties desired to incorporate it in their agreements they are privileged to do so."[34] No formal recommendation was made, however, beyond the indorsement of the principle in the fourth cardinal point.[35]

The advantage of such a clause to unions as well as employers is evident. A business, unaware of its financial conditions, disrupts the industry by poor management, and throw its employees out of work through frequent bankruptcy. The need for cost systems in the printing industry has been vividly shown in a series of surveys conducted by the United Typothetæ. The survey made in New York City showed the following results:

Group 1.—56 plants using the standard cost-finding system showed a profit of 11.4 per cent.

Group 2.—187 plants using no cost system, giving complete information, showed a profit of 7.4 per cent on cost.

Group 3.—471 plants using no cost system showed a profit of 1 per cent on cost.

Group 4.—554 plants giving incomplete information showed a 2.4 per cent loss on cost.[36]

The second and third groups of plants had accounting but not cost-finding systems. The fourth group had neither.

---

[33] Idem, New York City, Sept. 18, 1919, p. 15.

[34] Idem, p. 14.

[35] The fourth cardinal point was dropped at a subsequent meeting of the International Joint Conference Council at the insistence of the employers, the employees yielding to avoid loss of the other four. In view of this omission, the arbiters, during negotiations in New York City in December, 1920, held that the burden of proof was upon the employers to show that wage increases would be destructive to the industry.

[36] Survey of the Printing Industry of New York City, made by the United Typothetæ of America, January, 1920.

CARDINAL FOINT No. 5.

At the October 30, 1919, meeting, cardinal point No. 5 was adopted by the council:

> That controversies over wages, hours, and working conditions can and should be settled without resorting to lockouts or strikes through voluntary agreement to refer disputes when unable to settle through conciliation, to joint boards of arbitration composed of equal representation of employers and employees, provision being made for an impartial arbitrator if necessary.[37]

This was a first step toward bringing about the settlement of disputes throughout printerdom by arbitration. "The purpose of the clause is to have arbitration first recognized as a principle and then to work out the details * * * in accordance with the constitution of the International Joint Conference Council."[38]

A good many national arbitration agreements were found already in existence. "We have had an agreement with the American Newspaper Publishers Association since 1901," said the president of the stereotypers and electrotypers' union. "At the present time we have arbitration contracts with 200 newspapers who are members of the American Newspaper Publishers Association: that is about 50 per cent of the membership."[39] Other national agreements were found among the compositors and pressmen.[40]

The question of local and district arbitration boards was first discussed, and the argument put that a district arbitration board covering a competitive zone would tend greatly to standardize arbitration procedure, to equalize wage scales, and to introduce uniform shop practices. It would in a word, create precedents of industrial law: "Suppose you had the district in the State of New York and Pennsylvania * * * as time went on there would be less and less cases that came before that board that would ever really come to arbitration, because the board would decide them before they were arbitrated."[41]

Was the council to act as an arbitration tribunal itself? Some thought that was one of its functions under the constitution. And were the district councils, which had been proposed, to be arbitration bodies? These points were definitely settled in the negative. "It is within the jurisdiction of the International Joint Conference Council, acting as a legislative body, to pass judgments on the kind of arbitration, but not to act as a superior court. It would be just as if the Supreme Court were under Congress, or, rather, as if

[37] Proceedings, International Joint Conference Council, New York City, Oct. 30, 1919, p. 17.

[38] Idem, p. 4.

[39] Idem, New York City, Dec. 1, 1919, p. 39.

[40] A comparative study of arbitration agreements made by the Bureau of Industrial Relations of the United Typothetæ of America showed national agreements in force between the International Typographical Union and the United Typothetæ of America, the Closed Shop Branch of International Printing Pressmen and Assistants Union, and the American Newspaper Publishers Association, the International Union of Stereotypers and Electrotypers, and the International Association of Employing Stereotypers and Electrotypers, the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants Union, and the Printers' League of America.

[41] Idem, New York City, Dec. 1, 1919, p. 40.

Congress tried to become the Supreme Court of the United States. If we pass laws and interpret them, we are going to go into difficulty."[42]

So it was decided to recommend the setting up of judicial machinery outside the council but affiliated with it. This machinery would consist of a local board and a national one for each branch of the industry. The pressmen would have their own judicial bodies, and the compositors theirs. In that manner each branch of the industry would settle its own disputes, and those acquainted with its peculiar problems would be the arbitrators in each instance. The national board opened the way for appeal from hasty decisions.[43] The International Joint Conference Council was to act as coordinator of a process already under way. In fact agreements already in force showed a tendency toward standardization. Why not compare them and draw up a single inclusive contract, to be recommended to all employers and all unions in the printing industry? As its adoption spread, it would tend toward a further use of arbitration in industrial disputes, toward uniform wage scales and uniform shop conditions over wider and wider areas, and a common law for the industry. On May 17, 1920, such a contract was adopted by the council.[44]

The document is in three parts: (1) An international arbitration agreement for use between an international union and employers' association; (2) an individual arbitration contract for use between a local union and an employer or group of employers; and (3) a code of procedure. In order to obtain the protection guaranteed by the international agreement, it is necessary for a local employer or union to execute the individual arbitration contract. The working of the agreement can be illustrated by following a dispute in the course of adjustment. It is first submitted to the joint chairman of the "local board of conciliation." Failing settlement, it goes to the local board of conciliation itself. If no agreement can be reached it passes to the local arbitration board. (The president of the international union and the chairman of the arbitration committee determine jointly what questions can be arbitrated.) After consideration by the local arbitration board, if either party desires, he may appeal to the national arbitration board whose decision is final.

The noteworthy features of the arrangements are:

The individual arbitration contract protects the employer "against walkouts, strikes, or boycotts" and the union against lockouts or any "concerted action to discriminate against members of the union."

Work must "continue without interruption pending proceedings" and the hours, wages, and working conditions prevailing at the time the difference arises remain unchanged, until a final settlement is made.

---

[42] Idem, Chicago, Ill., Jan. 22, 1920, p. 36.

[43] Appeals under existing arbitration agreements were found to be few in practice but the principle was felt to be of great importance. In the stereotypers' and electrotypers' agreement there were but 12 appeals to the national board in 18 years of operation.—Proceedings, International Joint Conference Council, New York City, Dec. 1, 1919, p. 39.

[44] Idem, Philadelphia, Pa., May 17, 1920, p. 111.

In case of refusal to comply with a decision, "all aid and support to the employer or the local union refusing acceptance and compliance shall be withdrawn by both parties to this agreement. The acts of such recalcitrant employer or union shall be publicly disavowed and the aggrieved party shall be furnished by the other with an official document to that effect."

The cardinal principles for wage adjustment are included in the agreement and thus commit all those taking advantage of the international arbitration agreement to a constructive program of wage settlement. They may be restated as—

No. 1. That the industry frankly recognizes the cost of living, as compared to 1914, as the basic factor in wage adjustments.

No. 2. The industry to pay at least a reasonable living wage; scales below this to be adjusted in frank recognition of the basic principle involved.

No. 3. That, when not in conflict with the existing laws of a constituent body, local contracts be for a period not less than three years, and include a clause providing for annual readjustments of wages based upon cost of living, as determined by authorities jointly agreed upon, and upon the economic conditions of the industry at the time of readjustments.

No. 5.[45] That controversies over wages, hours, and working conditions between employers and employees can and should be settled without resorting to lockouts or strikes, through voluntary agreements to refer disputes, where unable to settle through conciliation, to joint boards of arbitration composed of equal representation of employers and employees, provision being made for an impartial arbitrator if necessary.

APPRENTICESHIP.

THE printing industry is "committing industrial suicide," some one remarked at the meeting held January 22, 1920. It was an accurate way of describing the condition into which a growing shortage of learners was forcing the industry. "In the city of Philadelphia we have 255 journeymen, * * *" remarked one representative. "If we make all the apprentices to which we are entitled according to union rules, we may turn out eight apprentices each year. It would take between 32 and 33 years to replace the working force that we have to-day." But owing to certain apprenticeship rules, "it actually takes 43½ years in the city of Philadelphia to replace the number of journeymen. * * *"[46]

Half of the January 22, 1920, conference was devoted to the problem. Too many apprentices were compelled to do porter work and not given a real chance to learn their job. "I had to steal the trade," remarked one union representative. Some unions did not allow enough apprentices. Many employers did not employ their permitted quota. Both conditions were bad. Technical schools should be encouraged, it was said; and above all an adequate wage paid. It was necessary to compete in these days with the high wages and short learning periods of the metal and other trades. The conferences, as a result of the discussion, advised the setting up of "local machin-

[45] See p. 37, for point No. 4.
[46] Proceedings, International Joint Conference Council, Chicago, Ill., Jan. 22, 1919, p. 100.

ery in the form of joint apprenticeship committees * * * to initiate and complete local surveys, to study, investigate, and report, and to act to secure enforcement of conditions jointly agreed upon governing the employment and training of apprentices." In addition they urged that contracts "include rules governing the employment and training of apprentices and a clause providing for a joint apprenticeship committee." [47]

The council's method of dealing with the apprenticeship problem is a good example of decentralized action. Joint local committees were the suggested instruments, the national body functioning as initiator and coordinator of the work. Here was another example, too, of a slow cumulative influence set up through working a common clause into local contracts, rather than an autocratic fiat from a ruling body.

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES.

DISTRICT COUNCILS

A COMPREHENSIVE system of industrial government would seem to require a joint national council, a district council, and local works and shop committees. Two district councils showed signs of arising spontaneously in the printing industry in the fall of 1919, one for the cities of Sacramento, San Francisco, Oakland, and other places, and another for Toledo, Cleveland, Detroit, and Columbus. At the December 1, 1919, meeting, the International Joint Conference Council considered the advisability of drafting a uniform constitution which it could recommend to budding organizations. It did not agree on a constitution but passed a resolution approving the principle of district councils, and requesting inquiring bodies to delay the setting up of a council until the International Council had worked out a uniform constitution.[48]

At subsequent meetings a tentative district map was drawn, upon which representation could be based. A proposed constitution is still under consideration.

If the plan of setting up district councils materializes, the purposes of the International council will have taken a long stride toward fulfillment. In "a standardization of hours, wages, working conditions, and shop rules" [49] one of the surest fields of usefulness, it should prove an even more effective instrument than the national body.

STANDARDIZATION OF CONTRACTS

Another job which the council holds before it is the standardization of contracts. A comparative study [50] of 43 local contracts brought out:

[47] Quoted from a circular letter sent out ofter the Jan. 22, 1920, meeting, to secretaries of local typothetæ and sanctioned by International Joint Conference Council.
[48] Proceedings International Joint Conference Council, New York City, Dec. 1, 1919, p. 24.
[49] Quoted from the proposed constitution for a district council, as among its objects.
[50] By Ethel Barbara Dietrich, for the International Joint Conference Council.

1. That the local contracts within each international differ to an amazing degree among themselves.

2. That except for specific trade matters, the local contracts of the three internationals do not differ from each other as widely as they differ within each international.

Contracts in the printing industry cover such important questions as: (1) Conference committees, (2) strikes, (3) wages, (4) hours, (5) conditions, (6) employment, (7) closed shop, (8) arbitration.

The greater uniformity that can be introduced will clearly tend to stabilize the industry; it will reduce the causes of disputes and will by making basic conditions the same in different shops lessen the shifting of labor. A blanket agreement for recommendation to the local unions has been discussed by the council but no formal action has been taken.

The achievements of the printers' council can be summarized by saying that it has introduced into the organized portion of one industry a new type of collective bargaining—characterized by an appeal to facts, and a tendency to test the demands of either party by the good of the industry as a whole.

The psychological gain attributable to the council is hard to overestimate. It alone would justify giving it a place in the structure of industry. Running through all the proceedings can be traced the modification of extreme views by both parties and the emergence of common ground upon which joint action is possible. The employer found himself confronted with a reasoned case accompanied by careful collated statistics to account for the "unreasonable" unrest he found among his employes. The trade-unionist lost any illusions he might have had of the employers' unlimited ability to pay.

The council does not deny the right of strike or lockout, but it expresses a belief that both are unnecessary and provides the means for a constitutional settlement of disputes. It is aware that as a matter of record most disputes are disposable by an appeal to obtainable facts, if only the machinery for inquiry and award is present.

One of the very real causes of "unrest" is without question the psychological one of suspicion. Because there is no intelligent separation of remediable difficulties from relatively unchangeable ones, the employee believes that everything should be transformed at once, and that only the cupidity of the employer resists an immediate Utopia. The employer, on the other hand, seeing the absurdity and extravagance of some of the employees' demands, often refuses, if he has the power, to make any changes. Or, if he accedes, he remedies all the immediate defects of his industry and is surprised and hurt at the ingratitude of his men. He has acted knowing nothing of the thought and feeling of his employees and often with little concrete knowledge of their working conditions. The printers met this difficulty squarely. By the practice of candor on both sides they were able to distinguish the obstacles they could remove at once from the forces which were a part of the condition of their

problem, and which would either have to be accepted or changed only as a result of prolonged effort.

Besides this important psychological advantage the concrete achievements of the council have been substantial and suggest the value of such an instrument in other industries. Wherever organizations of sufficient strength exist on both sides there will certainly be similar questions best dealt with by a democratic national body. The written constitution adopted by the printers suggestively outlines the possible scope of an American national council. The method of expressing its authority reveals a wise utilization of existing centers of power while concrete accomplishments show that the powers of the council itself are increasing.

The adoption and practice of the "cardinal points" is perhaps the most characteristic and significant work of the council. The very essence of the new type of collective dealing is crammed into those five cardinal points. That statement by the organized portion of a major industry that they "frankly recognize the cost of living, as compared to 1914, as the basic factor in wage adjustments," and that wage adjustments should be based upon the cost of living, "and upon the economic conditions of the industry at the time of readjustments" means the entrance of principles into a field hitherto under the sway of chance and economic might.

Old objections that such dealing eliminates desirable competition, opposes natural forces, and restricts trade, become conspicuously inapplicable in the light of this experiment. That "supply and demand" operate to determine wages and the wage earner's standard of living, no one will deny. But lesser and more immediate matters play a large part as well. Prof. Taussig, in his "Wages and Capital," enumerates as some of the causes that affect individual cases of adjustment "the extent to which the employer happens at the moment to be tied by contracts; the temper or pugnacity of one party or the other; the organization, the discipline, the available funds on either side," etc. It was some of these that the conference leaders of capital and labor in the printing industry were trying to wipe out or mitigate. By an appeal to facts, they discarded the poker-game method of wage negotiation, and dealt with the basic wage determinants. Of these they knew well enough that if given time wages will adjust themselves to prices, but they knew as well that in the process of waiting four or five years an immense total of human suffering would intervene. Perhaps by the natural laws of economy the real wages of various cities would adjust themselves to a common level. But during the waiting years the discrepancies were so wide that the shifting of labor and business caused terrific disruption and loss in the industry. They permitted a very considerable degree of competition, but it was the competition of men trying to be more efficient than one another instead of trying to undercut one another on the wage scale.

The method of bringing about the use of these principles was character-

istic. It was not through the passage of a mandatory general law, but through urging the use of clauses in local wage contracts.

After "The cardinal points," the international arbitration agreement is perhaps the council's most important measure. The arbitration agreement is in reality a long step toward the building up of industrial law. Most of the controversies submitted to strike decision would never become active disputes were there a regularizd system of permanent arbitration boards operating over large areas according to a code of industrial precedents.

Certain defects in the council are of course distinguishable. The method of representation in the council, which is at present exceedingly informal, is recognized as unsatisfactory and is being reconsidered.

Perhaps also a doubt may be raised by those who have a somewhat limited faith in human nature, as to whether the apparent good will of the employer was not based on necessity in the form of the "labor shortage." These doubters may ask: "Will not your council crumble shortly, when the labor market is flooded once more, and the employer is free to conduct his business in his own way?" There are two answers to this. The labor market shows no signs whatever of being flooded, inasmuch as it is little affected by the flow of immigration. And in the event of a full market it is an open question whether the employer would give up the demonstrated advantages of the council for an exercise of a power likely to be temporary.

The council will without doubt please neither conservatives nor radicals. The printers had no program of perfection. They did not set up a "complete system of industrial government" and endow it with full powers. And they used every available scrap of existing machinery, precedent, or good will looking toward improvement, whether it bore a democratic title or not. The printers' council has proceeded slowly, utilizing the tools at hand, and yet the principles it has adopted as basic are broad enough for the most liberal development.

Through such thorough examinations of all the facts, and willingness for joint experiment may perhaps arise those social and economic inventions which are among the principle needs of our time. The deeper forces set in motion by the Great War and its aftermath require some such flexible instrument for their adjustment. The unexplored effects of the industrial revolution, as well, require an elastic machinery, involving all parties at interest, to work out its newly emphasized problems of adjustment. For certain industries the national industrial council may perhaps supply such an instrument.

THE BUREAU OF INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH, 289 Fourth Ave., New York, is organized to promote sound human relationships in industry by consultation, fact studies and publicity.

It maintains a library of current information covering the field of industrial relations from which it is prepared to supply documentary and statistical data at moderate cost.

ROBERT W. BRUÈRE, *Director*

HEBER BLANKENHORN
MARY D. BLANKENHORN
ARTHUR GLEASON
LEONARD OUTHWAITE
ORDWAY TEAD
SAVEL ZIMAND

HERBERT CROLY, *Treasurer*

THE BUREAU OF INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH announces the publication of:

WORKERS' EDUCATION *

A study of American and foreign experiments in education under working class direction and control. By Arthur Gleason, 1921, 50c.

BUILDING GUILDS IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Story of an experiment in industrial re-organization. Reprint of study published in Journal of American Institute of Architects, February, 1921. By Ordway Tead, 25c.

MODERN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, a descriptive bibliography.

By Savel Zimand. With introduction by Charles A. Beard. H. W. Wilson Co., N. Y., 1921. (In press.)

NATIONAL COUNCILS IN THE PRINTING TRADES.*

Reprint of study published in Monthly Labor Review, February, 1921. By Charles R. Walker, Jr., 50c.

PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION; ITS PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE.

By Ordway Tead and Henry C. Metcalf. McGraw-Hill Book Co., N. Y., 1920, $5.00.

AMERICAN COMPANY SHOP COMMITTEE PLANS.

Digest of plans for employees' representation. 1919, $1.00.

THE INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL PLAN IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Reprints of the Reports of the Whitley Committee an Related Documents, together with Report on Operaion of Works Commitees. 1919, 25c.

HOW THE GOVERNMENT HANDLED ITS LABOR PROBLEMS DURING THE WAR.

Handbook of Federal War Labor Agencies. 1919, 25c.

Also

THE INTERCHURCH WORLD MOVEMENT REPORT ON THE STEEL STRIKE OF 1919.

Prepared with the technical assistance of the Bureau of Industrial Research for the Commission of Inquiry of the Interchurch World Movement. Harcourt, Brace & Howe, N. Y., 1920, paper $1.50, cloth $2.50.

And

PUBLIC OPINION AND THE STEEL STRIKE.

Supplementary reports of the Steel Strike Commission of Inquiry of the Interchurch World Movement, prepared with the technical assistance of the Bureau of Industrial Research. (In press). Harcourt, Brace and Howe, New York, 1921, paper $1.50, cloth $2.50.

* Half price on all orders through labor organizations.